

## Poppy's Epic

by skiesofice

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Her body was stilled.

><em>Like she's dead.<br>\_The wind mourned, wisping its way to Korra, howling as it crashed into a frozen engraving. It braced her exposed skin, the muscles in her arms straining and leading down to curled fingers, hardening fists to clench at her sides. Her clothes were pensively familiar and hung to her skin, overtopping the rippling muscles that cloaked the bones in her back.

>The sun surging in chased dust and caused shadows to lopsided over the effigy. Barely cold in her grave and she already had her statue.<br>The girl standing behind her could not bring herself to step forward, to see the face of the dead Avatar.

>She never did.<br>Her eyes were glossy with tears, shadowed by the revulsion that what she was seeing was true, that Korra was dead.

>She thrust her hand out, flittering fingertips skimming atop of colorless stone, tracing the closest arm to her with an open palm.<br>"Korra," she maundered, although it was no more than a spoken thought. Her hand slanted and her head bowed in remorse.

>The statute did not fall into dust as it once had, it did not shed the stone that compelled Korra's live body beneath it, but simply dwelled frozen to the ground.<br>It did more times than not.

>"Mom," a broken voice murmured.<p>

\* \* \*

><p>She remembered the way her hands felt against her face, somehow soft skin brushing away warm tears. This wasn't fake, not an illusion or another dream, the girl knew this. Her throat was tight, causing

her to take short breaths, no longer breathing, but wheezing. A steady drum pounded between her ears, blocked out her whimpers and hiccups as tears cascaded down her cheeks, dampening the Avatar's clothes before her.<p>

"Hush, my girl," the warrior soothed. "It's okay now, I've got you," Korra promised.

The girl tipped her chin, gazing into azure eyes swirling with too many emotions. "But-"

Her words were cut short as a tensed arm wrapped its way around her, squeezing her tightly, securely, running her nimble fingers through dark hair.

"But you were dead," the girl whispered, as if her words were stringing together a vile curse. No longer wheezing, she buried her head against Korra's chest, grabbing a fistful of her shirt and hanging on for dear life. "Your statue," she gasped. "I saw it. I saw it! A-and I don't ever want to see it again!" By the time she had finished her raging thoughts, she was shaking violently, hyperventilating all over again. The girl inwardly cursed, for she had wasted her precious breath on talking, voicing her fears.

Meanwhile, Korra's heart was throbbing, shattering almost, as her hand continued to stroke the girl's hair, carefully unsnarling the black knots.

"Poppy," she began softly, so that unless she wasn't sobbing, there was no way for her to hear the Avatar's words. Korra snaked her hand under Poppy's chin, gently raising her head for their gazes to meet, and Poppy's eyes in Korra's were lost.

"Even when I do go, I'll live on," she said easily. "You know this. I'll live on in the next Avatar, and I'll live on in you."

Poppy sniffled, nodding her head shakily and reaching up to rub her red eyes as Korra's hand fell away to hold her close. Her heartbeat was hard but steady, as always, Poppy noted in a faraway thought. Her mother was alive, so why was she crying that she would leave her? Poppy shut her eyes, wondering if the Avatar was disappointed in her, but pushed the thought away, knowing all too well that if she dwelled on it, the idea would consume her.

Still, the girl had no idea where these emotions were coming from, for she had never lost someone as important to her as her mother, or relatively close, leaving her to wonder where all of these emotions were coming from. Her feelings were far too strong, haunted her every waking moment and tortured her in her dreams, never leaving the Avatar's daughter a moment's rest.

"Alright?"

Poppy tensed herself once, taking her lower lip between her teeth and biting down firmly, nodding her head all the same under her mother's chin, desperately pretending to be a small child again, to be young and not overthink things, it almost made her smile.

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><p>The rocks were hard in her hand, leaving imprints in her red palm and pushing against callused skin before becoming weightless. Different colored eyes watched as sand fell to the ground. What had once been strong, sturdy, rock, was now broken and soft.<p>

\_Like me?\_

"Hey, Poppy."

The footsteps Poppy had heard weren't a part of her imagination, she realized, glimpsing up. Her friend, Maleek, trudged over to the curb where Poppy was and sat down beside her, though respecting her space, as they always did.

Maleek was a quiet kid, born a male but struggling with their true gender, they didn't identify as masculine or feminine currently. They had darker skin and straight, ebony hair. Poppy often got confused when she looked them in the eyes, for their gaze was so dark, when she first met them, she wasn't sure if they had pupils. Now she knew though, that their eyes were just very dark brown, and had grown to be quite comforting when she peered into them.

"Hey."

"Anything new?"

Poppy laughed sourly, but glanced over at her friend, shaking her head at their confused expression. "Nothing much, I guess," she muttered, and felt a far away breath on her shoulder. Maleek was staring at her, worry wearing in their gaze.

"A-another nightmare?" They stammered, half afraid Poppy would snap at them. Although she sensed her friend's fear, blinking away repressed emotions and falling apart before them, as she had done every time before.

"She's not going to, to die," they stammered simply, though their gaze was unfocused, blurry, it seemed. Poppy didn't think much of it, Maleek always had a lot on their mind, they could never really focus on one thing.

"I hope not," the girl murmured. She felt tears building up again, and grabbed another rock, repeating the process.

"Nah," Maleek said easily, their eyes clearing as they watched sand meet ground. They put a hand on her arm, and Poppy couldn't help but pull them into an embrace. "You're fine, Korra's fine, even Bolin is fine," her friend whispered, a touch of humour to their voice.

"We're all fine," she concluded with a small smile, leaning back to see Maleek returning the soft grin, nodding.

"Ah, thanks," she chuckled, a bit embarrassed. The Avatar's daughter surely didn't recover that quickly, she still had a lot on her mind, but it helped a lot to know that through everything, she'd still have Maleek. Long ago they had made her promise to never leave them, exclaiming that they would do the same for her. Nobody had to say it outloud anymore, they both knew it without words, though it never

hurt when they reassured each other.

"I'll probably come to your match tonight," Maleek murmured after a few moments of comfortable silence.

Poppy couldn't help but smile, sitting up a bit straighter. "Good, I'm glad."

"You're lucky, Poppy," they chuckled, raising an eyebrow at her.

"You'll be even more lucky, I'll make dad save you the best seat," she promised with a wide grin.

"Speaking of Pro-bending, Poppy, you had better get over there and start practicing, your match is soon." Bolin walked out in front of the duo, making himself known by laughing, his lips drawing back in a lopsided smile.

"Ah, alright," Poppy reluctantly agreed, hopping up and turning around, glancing down at Maleek.

"I'll see you there?"

The kid nodded their head just before Poppy dashed off.

No time to be sad now, she had a game to win.

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><p><strong>AN: Sorry if this seems a bit rushed! This is a story I will be continuing for my friend Apples That Bloom At Dawn. Today is their birthday, so this is sort of a present to them, and if you're reading it, I hope you enjoy! I'm currently with my grandparents, so strict bed time. XD Anyways, there are probably many errors in this, and I apologize for all, but I hope you all like the story line so far, as well as Poppy. Happy birthday again, I hope you had a wonderful day, and should be updating this every week or so. Enjoy, my lovelies! \*\*

End  
file.